

Full Building Evacuation Drill at 550 S. Vermont By Margaret Ayala



At 9:24 AM Wednesday, June 25, 2014, all staff and visitors at DMH Headquarters at 550 S. Vermont Avenue heard the following announcement over the Public Address System: “Attention. Attention. This is a drill. The evacuation drill is commencing. Floor Wardens and Group Leaders begin to evacuate all floors. Persons with mobility limits report to the nearest Stair Door Monitor. Elevators cannot be used. Again, this is a drill.” A similar message was sent concurrently via email and over the BERT radios.



The Building Emergency Response Team (BERT) evacuated and accounted for 731 staff and visitors in a full building evacuation drill that lasted a total of 16 minutes from

starting to the ending announcement. There were 26 people with mobility limits who participated in this drill. As everyone exited the building, the sound of sirens from the LA Fire Department could be heard. Unknown to the drill participants, LAFD was responding to a stuck elevator in the building.



There were no injuries and the real-life rescue was completed within minutes. The Assistant Building Emergency Coordinator (BEC) worked with the Administrative Deputy to ensure the area was safe to continue with the drill. DMH HQ at 550 conducts two annual full-building emergency drills: an evacuation drill and a drop-cover-hold drill in October. For additional BERT @ 550 information contact Margaret Ayala, Assistant BEC.